

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 15 of page 23 as follows:

Figure 3A depicts a decorative fabric cover ~~60~~ 60a fastened to the front surface **70** of the assembled hearth guard. A first end **61** of a fabric cover ~~60~~ 60a is fastened to the back surface of the side panel **13** covering (not shown) comprising the first end section **10** by a fastening means (not shown). The fastening means may be velcro, buttons, a tie-string or other fastening means. The fabric cover ~~60~~ 60a extends along the front surface **70** comprising front panels **12,44b,22** of the hearth guard to the side panel **23** comprising the second end section **20** thereby covering the front surface **70**. A second end **62** of the fabric cover ~~60~~ 60a is fastened to the front surface or to the back surface of the second side panel **23** covering (not shown) via the fastening means **80**. In this manner, the fabric cover ~~60~~ 60a may be attached as necessary to fit the length of the hearth. Optionally, the fabric cover ~~60~~ 60a may be wrapped around the bottom edges of the front panels **12,44b,22** comprising the front surface **70** and fastened to the back surfaces of the front panels **12,44b,22** covers via the fastening means (not shown) to reduce fabric slippage. Again, although not depicted in Figure 3A, if one or both of the end sections do not require a side panel the fabric cover may be fastened to the front or back surface of the appropriate front panel. Furthermore, although not depicted, the decorative fabric cover also may cover the foldable front panel **48b** of center section **46** when used in the assembled hearth guard **50**.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 17 of page 24 as follows:

Figure 3B depicts how a decorative fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b is fastened to the top surface **90** of the assembled hearth guard. A first end **61** of a fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b is fastened to the back surface of the side panel **13** covering **14** comprising the first end section **10** by a fastening means **80** as disclosed for the front panels **12,44b,22**. The fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b extends along the top surface comprising panels **11,44a,21** of the hearth guard to the side panel (not shown) comprising the second end section (not shown). The fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b wraps under the second side panel and fastens to the covering on the

back surface of the second top panel or to the covering on the back surface of the second side panel via the fastening means (not shown). Furthermore, although not depicted, the decorative fabric cover also may cover the foldable top panel 48a of center section 46 when used in the assembled hearth guard 50.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 11 of page 25 as follows:

The fastening position may be determined by the length L of the hearth in comparison to the length of the fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b. Optionally, as similarly described, the fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b may be wrapped around the back edges of the top panels and fastened to the back surfaces of the top panel coverings via the fastening means to reduce fabric slippage (not shown). As with Figure 3A and not depicted in Figure 3B, if one or both of the end sections do not require a side panel the fabric cover ~~60~~ 60b may be fastened to the front or back surface coverings of the appropriate top panel.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 20 of page 25 as follows:

Figure 3C depicts the assembled hearth guard installed on a raised hearth 105 of a fireplace 100. The hearth guard is shown installed with ~~cover 60~~ covers 60a,b in place to cover all surfaces, corners and edges of the hearth guard. The front edge of the top fabric cover and the top edge of the front fabric cover meet at approximately the front edge of the hearth. The front and top edges are fastened together by a fastening means 80 such as Velcro, buttons, snaps, or other fastening means as previously described.